

EDUCATION AND THE EMOTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the question of emotions: whether emotions are of interest, or concern to the educator; whether they require specific educational attention; what, if anything, our educational aims with regards^{to} emotions, are; whether emotions pose any special problems for the educator; and so on.

The first chapter looks at the nature of emotions, and attempts to draw some sort of conceptual map of the class of things we call 'emotions'.

The second chapter discusses the ways in which we can be more, and less, rational about our emotions, and a number of specific educational aims are outlined.

The third chapter argues that educators influence children's emotions. This influence cannot be undone simply by an adherence to rationality, and leaves the educator facing some difficult questions about the direction and nature of that influence. To a degree he can answer this with reference to mental health, human happiness, and a necessary minimal social morality. But though this may provide him with general guidelines, it will not justify the specific influence he has on children's emotions.

The fourth chapter attempts to provide some answers to this problem. The argument is that just as comprehensive knowledge and rational thinking

protects us from being indoctrinated with regards^{to} our beliefs, so comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the emotions and values of other people (something gained through the ability to empathize) protects us from being indoctrinated with regards^{to} our emotions.

The final chapter looks briefly at the skills needed to understand our own emotions, and to empathize with other people: the ability to express and communicate our feelings effectively.

CHAPTER I

THE EMOTIONS

The question I shall attempt to answer in this chapter is 'What is an emotion'.

The word that seems to be most closely associated with emotions is 'feeling'. We feel frightened, angry, elated or proud and these are but a few examples. Do all emotions involve feelings? We can speak of hating a job, or admiring a person, without feeling anything at that particular moment. But we cannot make such claims if we have never felt much about the job, or person. And how can I be annoyed right now, and not feel anything? The distinction to be drawn here is between the temporary states of emotion we experience and the generalizations we make about such states. By calling someone happy, or jealous or irritable we may be identifying his emotional disposition, rather than his present feelings.

But to discover whether it is true to say that we must feel something to have an emotion we must discover what these feelings are. They may be physiological sensations. We can feel cold or nauseous with fear, or despair. But these feelings can be explained in terms of the weather, or food, as well. When frightened our breathing and heartbeat speed up, our throat becomes dry, and our skin goes pale with goosepimples. Yet this list does not constitute a

sufficient condition for the occurrence of fear: these bodily changes may be due purely to physiological processes. Nor are goosepimples, or a dry throat, necessary components of feeling frightened. The detailed bodily sensations experienced may differ among individuals. But perhaps having some sensations (though not especially sensation a, b, or c) may constitute a necessary condition for experiencing fear or for that matter any other emotion. W.P.Alston makes this point

"It seems impossible to envisage a clear case of an emotional state which does not involve such a disturbance, along with sensations of it."1

This disturbance or "disturbed state of the organism" is, according to Alston "a pattern of bodily sensations". But is it so impossible to envisage a case of, say, mild envy, which does not involve such disturbance, no sensations? It may be logically impossible to experience rage, or ecstasy, or terror, without symptoms like increased heartbeat, increased adrenalin, and so on. It may also, as a matter of empirical fact be discovered that even the calmer emotions bring about a change in the organism - granted of course that agreement can be reached on what its undisturbed state is. But this is by no means obvious, and can thus hardly be part of the meaning of the word 'emotion'.

It is true that many emotions do affect our physiology. (The opposite also holds). It is further true that we logically cannot feel an emotion like terror without at least some of the extreme physical symptoms associated with it: we could at the most be called badly frightened. But though physiolo-

-logical disturbances and sensations may constitute necessary conditions for some emotions to occur, they do not do so for all.

No doubt, when I claim to be feeling annoyed I am not simply referring to my physiological condition - such as feeling hot. Perhaps I am referring to a unique feeling that I can identify as 'annoyance'. Thus emotions might just be qualitatively distinguishable feelings, open to introspection. This formulation of what an emotion is has been criticised on three counts. Firstly it is difficult to see how we can qualitatively 'feel' the difference between, say, rage, annoyance and indignation, Secondly if emotions are just feelings within us, it should be possible to have any emotion about anything. But I cannot logically feel remorseful about a mountain view, or proud of the moon. Thirdly this model cannot account for the notion of people making mistakes about their emotions. I shall discuss these three objections in turn.

Rage and annoyance appear to differ in strength, not in quality. This suggests that emotions are inner feelings which are quantitatively as well as qualitatively distinguishable. Indignation and annoyance may well feel alike, but this should not surprise us, as they are closely related emotions. We are not likely to confuse them with embarrassment, or grief. Some differences in these feeling components do, then, seem to exist. But how can we tell indignation from annoyance, if not by feeling? I may be annoyed to find my mail has been opened. I will be indignant if I discover this was done deliberately to keep an eye on my

correspondence. The difference between the two does not lie so much in my feelings, but in how I interpret the situation. An accidental mistake may annoy me, but a breach of my right to private correspondence makes me indignant. Seeing an injustice is part of the concept 'indignation'. In the same way we cannot logically feel remorse at a mountain view, or proud of the moon. Regretting a past deed seems to be a necessary part of feeling remorse. Pride applies to things that belong to me, or that I have in some sense brought about. Thus the moon cannot be the object of my pride - unless of course I imagine I am somehow responsible for its existence.

A cognitive factor has entered this analysis of emotions. It is this which allows us to distinguish between annoyance and indignation and which makes it impossible to have any emotion about anything. The first two objections to seeing emotions as just feelings have been sustained, although a feeling component of varying type and strength does appear to be present at times: for this allows us to distinguish annoyance from grief, or rage.

Can we be more specific about the cognitive element of emotions? R.S. Peters argues that wishing (though not wanting) is conceptually linked with emotions.

"...A lover, overwhelmed by his love, may wish that he were one with his beloved; but he cannot strictly speaking want such a logical impossibility. Yet these are just the sorts of thoughts that come into the heads of those deeply in love."²

But even wishing to be at one with one's beloved, or

wishing anything in particular at all, does not seem to be a necessary condition for love. What do we wish for when we feel amused, surprised, moved, or exhilarated? We are interpreting the situation in a certain way. But wishes are not clearly involved. Peters might want to argue that amusement is not a clear example of an emotion. Yet what else is it? It is a feeling that can sweep over us, sometimes at the most inappropriate moments. Likewise, when feeling moved, upon hearing a piece of music, or at an unexpected show of affection or generosity toward us, we need wish nothing, yet we certainly seem to be experiencing an emotion. According to Peters :

"A wife who is mourning for her dead husband wishes fervently that he were alive."³

If this wife did not wish her husband alive we would indeed conclude that she was not really grieved by his death. Thus this particular emotion, grief, does seem to have a conceptual link with wishing. But not all emotions do.

Wishing something is not, then, as Peters suggested, a necessary condition for having an emotion per se, but it may be such for some particular emotions.

Can we, in any other way, delimit this cognitive factor? Peters again writes:

"Emotions have in common the fact that they involve appraisals elicited by external conditions which are of concern to us, or by things which we have brought about or suffered."⁴

It is not true that the appraisals we make need have any connection with external conditions, though in fact of course they often do. But I can have strong

emotions about completely imaginary situations. However it does seem true that the appraisal must be something that is of concern to us. This is obvious in the case of emotions such as anger, hatred or joy. But even amusement must 'strike a chord'. Furthermore the appraisal must be evaluative in some way. Facts about , for instance, the time of day, or the speed of a passing car cannot in themselves be the basis of a particular emotion. But if we add certain other facts and evaluations, such as that we are running late for an important appointment, or that school has just finished and the safety of children concerns us, we can arrive at our feelings of anxiety, or indignation.

Some such evaluation is not a sufficient condition for emotions. I can think it unjust that someone opened my mail without feeling indignant. I can think my situation dangerous, without feeling frightened. Is some sort of cognition, appraisal, or evaluation a necessary condition for an emotion? The answer to this question depends on what we have in mind when we talk of 'cognition', or 'appraisal'. I may, but need not consciously think "I wish I had that" when I feel envious, or "I'm glad that is over" when I feel relieved . We speak of feelings like envy, or relief 'sweeping over us'. It is not clear what kind of cognition is involved here.

We are constantly making judgements, evaluative and otherwise, without being aware of it. We 'automatically' estimate the speed of cars, and the distance across the road. We 'appreciate' a painting or a piece of music. We 'sense' the atmosphere at a party. We 'take to' people at first sight. We 'feel' someone's contempt , or amusement. In these examples we are appraising something. But it is not a fully

conscious process, and it may in fact be very difficult to pinpoint just why we like or dislike a person - or a book, or a house. It is likely that we are evaluating subtle clues about the situations or people in terms of our past experience. Sometimes we may feel irritated with a person because of reasons a, b and c, and sometimes we just feel irritated with someone for no apparent reason. In the latter case we still assume that there must be some subconscious reasons for this irritation - for if it is always felt toward the same person, he is in some sense the object of our irritation, even if we are not sure why. Through seeing him in a different context, or perhaps hearing someone else's description of him (maybe in terms of his pompous manner, or chauvenistic attitude) we sometimes discover later why a person irritated us.

But what about the very general feelings of irritation, depression or for that matter, happiness which we sometimes experience, and which do not appear to be connected to any appraisal we make? Or the specific feelings of enjoyment which I may get from sunbathing, but not from swimming. Are these emotions which lack a cognitive core? This question is made difficult by the notion of subconscious appraisals, which appears to make it impossible in principle to prove that we can have non-cognitive emotions. We may be happy with our situation at a conscious level, and yet feel depressed. All introspection and psycho-analysis may fail to reveal any repressed appraisals. Yet this cannot constitute conclusive evidence against their

existence. But it does at least constitute some evidence . And there are alternative explanations which should be explored. One is the purely physiological one. We find that when we are tired, run down, or undergoing certain bodily changes (such as some women in their menopause) we often become depressed and morose. Our irritation may be due to a headache, or a bout of flu. Sometimes things like the weather affect us. Wind may make us feel exhilarated, sun contented.

But should we call these things emotions?

John Wilson thinks not:

"Emotions may be distinguished from moods. Emotions characteristically have targets or objects."5

Of course the sun might be called the object of my contentment, in which case this, at least, would be an example of a non-cognitive emotion. But must emotions have objects at all? The feeling element of my depression at, say, the state of my work, is so similar to the feeling element of my depression which has no target or object, that it seems strange to call one an emotion and the other not. Similarly my bursting into tears for no reason seems to be as much an expression of an emotion, as my bursting into tears because things are going badly, and that happy feeling I have when they improve is identical to a happy feeling I sometimes have which does not correlate to my situation at all. For this reason I find it more useful to include moods under the general term 'emotions'. In this case there are emotions for which the question "Why are you feeling like that?" cannot be answered in terms of an appraisal: I just happen to feel happy, or to enjoy the sun.

An appraisal of our situation is therefore neither a necessary, nor a sufficient condition for something to be an emotion, although it is necessary for some individual emotions such as remorse, and pride.

This leads us to an important distinction. We must appraise our feelings, even if we are not aware of making any appraisal of our situation. If I am conscious of feeling happy I must have identified a certain pleasant feeling of emotional well-being withing myself. But I need not know why I feel that way, and even when I do think I know why, that explanation need not be in terms of any appraisal I have made of my situation. Suppose that I feel happy whilst at the beach. I may not know why. Or I may attribute the feelings to physiological factors and the intermittent sensations of hot sun, warm sand and cool water. Or I may attribute the feeling to the appraisal I make of my situation: here I am enjoying a lazy, comfortable time at the beach rather than sitting inside doing some boring job. Or I may attribute my feeling of happiness to a combination of physiological causes, and my situation. Only in the case of those emotions conceptually connected to an appraisal of my circumstances does the distinction fall away. When I feel remorseful, the appraisal by which I identify my emotion and the appraisal of my situation become one and the same thing. Recognizing my emotion as remorse is dependent upon appraising a past action of mine as one to be morally regretted.

The third objection to seeing emotions simply as inner feelings was that this would not allow us to make sense of the notion of people being mistaken about

their emotions. This notion is now not straight forward. Perhaps we could be mistaken about what we attribute our emotion to: our appraisal of the situation, or, for instance, our physiological condition. Or perhaps we could be mistaken about the particular appraisal to which we attribute our emotion. Or perhaps we could be mistaken about the very feeling we are experiencing : we might think we are enjoying a party whereas really we are bored.

How could we establish whether someone is, or could be mistaken about his emotions in any of these three ways? Take the first. Suppose we have a friend who is very open about her feelings to us. We have noted that she is generally cheerful except when she has not eaten for some time. Then she becomes irritable, and sees every situation in its worst possible light. As soon as she has some food she cheers up. Suppose this is a very consistent pattern. When hungry she might attribute her depression and irritation to the situation she finds herself in. We can make a case that she is mistaken and that the cause of her emotion is really lack of food: as time and time again the only thing that changes, which correlates with a change in her emotions is that she eats something. We can produce a rather similar example for the second way in which someone might be mistaken about their emotions. Suppose again we have a friend who is very open about his feelings to us. He seems to love his job: unless he, on rare occasions, shares an office with someone else: when he cannot find a good thing to say about the job, or any aspect of it. If this is again a consistent pattern, we can make a case that, on those occasions our friend's annoyance is due to his having to share the office, rather than

to his appraisal of the job itself.

Both these examples are dependent upon the person being frank about his feelings. We ourselves discover mistakes we have made about our own emotions in the same way that others do. But the third way suggested in which we could possibly be mistaken about our emotions is more difficult. Can we ever be wrong in identifying the very feeling we are experiencing? Could someone else ever show us we were thus mistaken? We would expect to have here the same kind of private knowledge that we have of thoughts and physical sensations. Notions of mistakenly identifying our thoughts as being about cricket when they are really about the weather, seem odd. Yet talk of being mistaken, or fooling ourselves about our feelings is relatively common. The evidence produced to prove such mistakes is usually based on our behaviour, subsequent recollections of our feelings, and sometimes on latent expressions of emotions (for instance in dreams, or under psycho-analysis). The reliability of these sources of evidence must be questioned.

Any deduction about my emotions from my behaviour other than verbal expressions, must be based on an assumption that there is, if not a logical, then at least a strong contingent connection between the two. Is this so? Having an emotion does not necessitate any particular action. I may run away when frightened, or I may do nothing at all. I may leave when I feel bored, or hit people when I feel angry, but I need not. Perhaps the tendency to act remains, even if I refrain for other reasons. But what sort of action do I tend toward when I feel sad, or delighted, or proud? I may wish that the cause of my sadness were rectified, but I need

have no tendency to act. In the cases of delight and pride, a suitable action does not even spring to mind. This difficulty we have of even thinking of an action which might be appropriately linked with these feelings show that even a strong contingent link between emotions and actions is unlikely. A conceptual one is non-existent: there is nothing contradictory about non-active indignation, although this emotion word may be more closely associated with action than, say, delight, because it also operates as a motive word.

However when another person claims that I was enjoying myself, or seemed sad, or seemed annoyed at a particular time, he does not usually speak of my purposive action, but of what he took to be overt expressions of my emotion: my face, eyes, voice, gestures and so on. There is again no logical connection between, say, my feeling happy, or amused, and smiling, or between being annoyed and frowning. But we do have a whole network of expectations. We deduce from certain facial expressions, ways of talking, or moving, that someone is feeling proud, or elated, or disdainful. Once again it is often difficult for us to pinpoint the reasons for such deductions. Why do we think someone seems contemptuous, or gleeful? The clues are subtle. Furthermore we will be involved in making a series of complicated judgements about the person's situation, his personality, and the way in which most people would feel, given his circumstances. Our own feelings must often affect these judgements. Upon seeing a man's serious face as he watches his flirtatious wife, we might assume that he is jealous. In fact he might just be trying to remember the name of her newly-found partner. Such mistakes seem inevitable, especially as

people need not show any signs of their emotions at all. I can 'boil inwardly' with rage and 'burn within' with desire. Thus, although we do in fact often judge a person's emotions from his behaviour, and outward expressions, it would seem presumptuous to assume we can just 'read off' the emotions of others with any great accuracy, and even more presumptuous to think that we know what another person is feeling, better than they do. Though there may be cases where the accumulated evidence in terms of behaviour and appearances lends some support for such presumption.

What if we ourselves think we have mis-identified our emotion? This cannot be an easy matter to decide, for there is no reason to suppose that emotions come singly. I may enjoy flying and yet feel afraid at the same time. I may be annoyed about the noise made by some children, and yet feel envious of their exuberance. Some emotions do appear to be mutually exclusive: it seems incongruous that boredom and enjoyment could be felt simultaneously. Yet even this is possible for we speak of experiencing feeling at 'different levels'. We might be enjoying ourselves in a superficial way, but 'deep down' feel bored, while at a third level finding amusement in watching ourselves perform in a particular social setting. In these examples we make our appraisals from different vantage points. We speak of 'stepping outside ourselves', of 'watching ourselves'.

How then can I ever know that my appraisal of what I am feeling is mistaken? What sense can be made of talk about 'becoming aware of yourself', and 'not fooling yourself'? Suppose we think we are enjoying a party, but upon being challenged 'realize' that we are bored. Can we know that we were

bored all the time? Our feelings and appraisals may have changed at that moment. Can we be sure that our recollection is not affected by our present emotions? We may never be able to prove conclusively that we had misidentified our emotions. But we can produce certain sorts of evidence for such a conclusion. Our realization at the party may be that we assumed rather than felt our enjoyment, as that is what parties are for. Thus we may have mistakenly deduced our feelings from our appraisal of the situation (This is a party, therefore I must be enjoying myself) rather than having appraised the actual feelings we were experiencing (a heavy unpleasant feeling). Such mistakes seem less likely in the case of strong feelings, for we would be able to appraise them more easily. How could I overlook feelings of extreme boredom in myself?

But suppose someone makes what I consider to be an unjust and harsh judgement about me. I may listen with apparent calm and think myself unaffected. But later I find myself repeatedly reliving the scene in a manner that is anything but calm. Perhaps this is an example of straight forward delayed reaction: I really was not upset until I rethought the episode. But I may have been mistaken about my initial reaction in the sense that my appraisal of my emotions was not comprehensive enough. I calmly dismissed the judgement made about me because it differed from what I took to be my own more informed assessment of myself and my situation. But I ignored my reactions such as "How could he think that of me?"; "How dare he be so confident when he knows so little?"; "How can people judge others like that?"; "Why has he such a deep-seated prejudice." I was not mistaken when I identified my reaction to what was said as one of calm indifference. But I over-

Looked emotions ranging from astonishment through to indignation, and sadness in myself.

What can we now, at last, say about feelings and emotions. It has become clear that the two concepts are not synonymous. For it is not the 'feel' but the appraisal of our situation which separates an emotion like indignation from one such as annoyance. The feeling element does indeed seem to be a force within us. It can range from pleasant to unpleasant, from weak to strong, and from tranquil to turbulent, whilst amusement tends to be more pleasant, weak and tranquil. Some emotions do not of course fit neatly into such categories. We may feel pleasantly surprised to run into an old acquaintance, and sadly surprised to hear he is recovering from a serious illness. Thus unless we obtain some information about what sort of surprise a person has experienced, we cannot judge it to be pleasant or unpleasant.

Even if we cannot name the particular feeling we are experiencing, we can still appraise it in terms of how strong, turbulent and unpleasant (or otherwise) it is. We can, in fact, at times say little else, except that we are feeling 'funny', or 'strange' or 'tense'. We may not be aware of any physiological sensations accompanying it. But though I may be unable to name my feeling, or to relate it to my situation as I see it, I would nevertheless claim to be experiencing an emotion. I want to argue, in other words that whenever I have a feeling, I have an emotion. But having a feeling is not sufficient for having certain individual emotions, such as remorse or terror

which are conceptually connected to our appraisal of our situation, and certain physiological sensations, respectively. Neither is having a feeling necessary for having an emotion. The following can be recognized as a description of jealousy: "I felt quite calm as I congratulated him, but the thought that it should have been me, would not leave me." Or a description of grief: "My body felt very numb; I kept thinking 'Oh, no he is dead', but I could feel nothing at all."

Having a feeling is then a sufficient, but not a necessary condition for having ^{some} an emotion. But it does not follow from this that having a feeling is a sufficient condition for having ^{this} a particular emotion, such as remorse.

The ~~concept~~ of an emotion is, like many others, at least in part a cluster concept. This means that a number of factors combined make up the necessary and sufficient conditions of any one of the class of things we call 'emotions'. Making some sort of appraisal is indeed a necessary condition for having an emotion. But this appraisal may be of our situation (including certain wishes we might have) in the case of emotions like indignation. or pride , or grief, or it may merely be a very minimal appraisal of the feelings we are experiencing: in cases such as happiness, or depression. Physiological sensations, although perhaps necessary for some individual emotions, do not constitute a necessary, or a sufficient condition for all emotions, whilst actions and overt expressions of feelings are not conceptually connected to emotions at all: though there might be a contingent link.

The proof for this formulation of the concept of emotions lies with the common day usage of individual emotion words. Different words stress different aspects of our emotions: ~~terror~~ and embarrassment highlight the physiological condition. Love and sorrow seem more closely connected to feelings, pride and remorse to appraisals of our situation. Some emotion words have information about their intensity written into them: ecstasy cannot be mild, nor amusement overwhelming. Some emotions require a more detailed appraisal of the situation than others: feeling embarrassed and feeling self-conscious may be subspecies of a general feeling of inadequacy.

Thus this exposition of what an emotion is will be valid if all concepts which we want to include in the class of things called 'emotions' can be adequately analysed in terms of combinations of our physiological sensations, appraisals of our feelings, and appraisals of our situation.

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CHAPTER 2

EMOTIONS, RATIONALITY and EDUCATION

We cannot, strictly speaking, educate the emotions. We educate people, not parts of people. We can, however, educate people in particular respects. Thus we could consider educating children with regards to their emotions. It is useful to call this 'education of the emotions'; in the same way that religious education means educating children in the field of religion. We cannot speak of 'emotional education' because this suggests we are referring to the nature of the education, rather than to the particular sphere of education we are concerned with. What, then, is education of the emotions? Much has been written about the concept of education. Suffice it to say that I am interested in that concept which concerns the increase of individual freedom, and the power of self-determination. A fuller and more rational understanding of the world and ourselves reduces the number of apparently arbitrary forces that shape our lives, and allows us to find realistic means to achieve realistic ends.

Our emotions are often seen as one of the forces that victimise us. We speak of anger sweeping over us, or love welling up inside us, and of relief flooding through us. We are familiar with finding our feelings at odds with our beliefs. Yet we hold people at least partially responsible for their emotions. We tell them to stop worrying, not to be jealous, to control their anger, and to discard

their self-pity. To make any sense of this apparent contradiction we must remember that our emotions stem from physiological and subconscious sources, as well as from consciousness. It is obviously important to discover what our educational aims are to be in the field of the emotions.

In his book 'Education in Religion and the Emotions' John Wilson asks in what ways we can fail with regards our emotions. He draws the answers he obtains from this question up into a detailed taxonomy of components which he believes allow us to identify the emotionally educated person. Our aims for the education of emotions, he argues, should therefore be the development of these components. Summarised his taxonomy reads as follows:

- | | | |
|---|----------|--|
| A(i) Relevant cognitive abilities and attainments('Knowing that') | AUTEMP | awareness of one's own emotions. |
| | ALLEMP | awareness of others' emotions |
| | GIG(1) | knowledge of facts 'knowing that' |
| (ii) Relevant aptitudes & techniques('knowing how'). | GIG(2) | 'know-how', social and other relevant skills |
| | KRAT(1) | |
| B Bringing (i) & (ii) to bear. | KRAT(1a) | 'noticing' |
| | | 'thinking |
| | KRAT(1b) | 'thinking fully' |
| | KRAT(1c) | 'taking responsibility' |
| C Feeling rightly as result of bringing (i) & (ii) to bear. | KRAT(2) | right emotion |

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Let us look at all this in more detail. There is firstly good reason to encourage AUTEMP, or in other words, the appraisal of our feelings in as

detailed a manner as possible. Just as we expect education to help our understanding of the world, so we can reasonably expect it to help our understanding of ourselves. Suppose that I only know that I have an unpleasant tense feeling, but not whether this is because I am tired, and depressed, or because I am worried about an approaching deadline, or because I am envious of a friend who is enjoying his holiday. I will then not be able to scrutinize any beliefs and values underlying this feeling, nor will I be able to take any action which might appear appropriate. Not having identified my feeling, I will not wonder whether the deadline really matters, or whether my friend is in fact enjoying himself, or whether I ought to take some rest. If we cannot identify our emotions we will not know that our view of a situation could be coloured. Suppose, for example, that the people at a social function strike me as hypocritical, their attempts at enjoyment forced. If I realize that I am tired and depressed, I may see that my judgement possibly reflects my own mood, rather than a lack of sincerity on the part of anyone else. Being aware of our feelings is then a necessary condition for increased objectivity. Encouraging objectivity is certainly educationally justifiable.

The identification of an emotion can not in itself decide its rationality. Judging that a feeling I have is unpleasant is part of the concept of feeling depressed. In the same way it seems logically impossible to dislike the feeling aspect of happiness. These feelings are in themselves non-

-rational in the way that pain is. But what if I sometimes do seem to enjoy my own depression, or dislike my own happiness? I may want to foster my image as a sensitive person, or attract sympathy from other people. Here my appraisal has changed. I am no longer just identifying my feelings, but rather appraising my situation (which in this case includes the fact of my own depression, or happiness).

By properly identifying our emotions we can scrutinize any underlying beliefs. Some emotions are conceptually linked to particular appraisals. I must, for example, believe that I have something to feel proud of, or something to feel remorseful about, in order to feel those emotions. But other emotions have no such link, and I can certainly feel anxious or frightened without being able to point to an appraisal of my situation which supports such anxiety, or fear. Our emotions are irrational if we do not know what beliefs they are based on, or if they are based on unsupported beliefs. (Lack of Wilson's GIG(1)). For example my contempt for people of another race is irrational if I do not know what beliefs this contempt is based on, or if I do hold certain beliefs about this race for which I can produce little or no evidence. Awareness of the emotions of other people (ALLEMP), is only necessary in cases where those emotions are part of the situation we are appraising. I need have no knowledge of the feelings of anyone else when I am annoyed at missing a bus, unless of course I am annoyed because I am considering the feelings of someone affected by my being late.

Secondly, then, to the extent that education

develops our knowledge and understanding of our world (including other people) to that extent it helps us to become rational in our emotions. For any increase in understanding will allow us to be more realistic in our interaction with our social and physical environment and thus be better equipped to cope emotionally. The frustrations caused by unfamiliar and misjudged situations often result in forms of irrational emotional response.

But such a general increase in awareness and understanding of our own emotions, and of the beliefs and values underlying our emotions, provide the necessary, but not the sufficient conditions for being more rational about our emotions. I may recognize my own depression (AUTEMP), without considering the effect this might have on my observations of others. I may know that someone else will be upset (ALLEMP) at my being late, and yet not worry about missing my bus. And learning that my beliefs about another race are mistaken (GIG(1)) may not quell my contempt. Wilson explains the different categories of such failure in KRAT(1):

"..an older pupil is present when a nervous new boy comes into the playground. He may (a) be so out of touch with the real world that he fails even to notice the new boy, or fails to notice that he is new, or that he is crying" or (b) he notices this, but doesn't bother to think seriously about what it must be like to be a new boy, surrounded by strangers: or (c) he does all this, and thinks vaguely 'Poor kid', or 'It must be rotten for him!', or 'Somebody ought to go and talk to him', but these thoughts do not represent any serious belief that he ought to feel (and display) sympathy." 2

This particular example concerns a moral situation,

but the general aim at stake here appears to be a commitment to rational and responsible thinking in every aspect of life. It is far too common to find people unwilling to use for topics of personal concern, the standard of thinking they might employ, for instance, in their professional life. In fact it is most difficult to be rational about the beliefs in which we have invested the greatest emotional content.

Thus our third aim in the education of the emotions is to encourage the objective consideration of all the evidence available (including that which may contradict certain beliefs we hold) and the ability to take seriously this evidence and change our beliefs accordingly. Perhaps this can be summed up as the ability to be rationally flexible, or open minded.

We may however appraise our situation clearly and carefully and yet find that our feelings do not fall into line with our beliefs. This is a failure in Wilson's KRAT(2). I may, for instance enjoy lightning, but feel frightened of thunder. I may be fully aware that the danger lies in the lightning not the thunder, but this may not alter my feelings. But I can in a sense disown them, by recognizing their discrepancy with the facts. Furthermore here we may be able to bring certain skills to bear (these could come into Wilson's GIG(2)). For there are a great many ways in which we can attempt to alter what we ourselves recognize to be irrational emotions. Sometimes mere recognition of the irrationality will change them. But beyond that we may find that such emotions lessen if we confide in someone, and talk

our feelings out - perhaps many times. Or we may just constantly remind ourselves of the beliefs which contradict our emotions. Some emotions are thought to stem from experiences in our past which have embedded themselves, if not necessarily in our conscious memory, then certainly in our subconscious. We may attempt to recall these experiences in order to get them into perspective and realize their limited relevance to the present. There are a variety of other methods by which we might come to terms with our past, including hypnotism, role playing, and other forms of acting. We may attempt to condition ourselves out of the emotional effects of our past. Thus we can try to overcome our fear of motorbikes by spending a lot of time on and around them. Or we may consciously alter our environment: if I wish to eradicate my feelings of contempt towards another race, I can immerse myself in their culture and ensure that I meet members of that race on a day to day basis. Sometimes purposive changes in behaviour can have some effect: by laughing and joking to hide our fear, the danger may seem less real and take on comic proportions. Finally we can affect our emotions through such practices as meditation and yoga among others, and by means of a number of chemicals such as tranquilizers and amphetamines.

I am not suggesting that we, as educators should set out to alter the emotions of children, by for instance, giving them tranquilizers, or whatever. I am suggesting that we should make children aware that tranquilizers are one of a number of ways by which

they can affect their emotions, should they choose to. Obviously the above is by no means a complete list. The important thing is that there are ways in which we can attempt to change our emotions, when we recognize them to be irrational: when, in other words, we fail in KRAT(2).

Therefore our fourth educational aim can be to impart relevant information, and relevant skills which will allow us to come to terms with our emotions more successfully. This may include the realization that our attempts to eliminate a certain emotion are limited. Yet even then we retain an element of freedom, because knowing this we can be careful not to place ourselves in situations in which certain emotions, or tensions within ourselves arise. Suppose, for example, that a person upon seeing certain sorts of films, becomes extremely upset and frustrated at his own impotence to solve the problems depicted on screen. He will agree that this is quite irrational: there is no way in which he can play a role in the events set down on film. He may find however, that regardless of how he tries, at certain times he cannot divorce himself sufficiently from the situation and remember that it is only a film. He may then choose to avoid certain films which will upset him greatly, for little apparent purpose: such as films which include a lot of senseless physical and interpersonal violence.

So far so good. It is not my purpose to discuss the ways in which the list of components put forward by Wilson can be developed in children. Any methods must be scrutinized to ensure that they are in themselves educationally justifiable, but there is undoubtedly a wide range of activities, from the more

orthodox teaching situation, to things like non-verbal interaction exercises, which can be employed.

It is my purpose to draw attention to the fact that our focus has been very much on irrational emotions: on emotions which do not appear to be based on any conscious appraisals, or on appraisals which contain unsupported or unsupportable beliefs, or on emotions which contradict our conscious appraisals. But , as I have already mentioned, in the previous chapter, the appraisals of our situations must in some way be evaluative. Take for instance, Wilson's example of the older pupil and the nervous new boy. The step from noticing the new boy crying, to thinking one ought to feel and display sympathy could not be made without plugging in some value judgement about the importance of valuing and being concerned for other people. What help can rationality be to us here? Wilson himself writes:

"We should resist, therefore, any suggestion that the justification of wants and emotions should proceed by identifying a number or class of objects that are 'truly' desirable , pitiable, fearful, lovable ,and so on, or the more obviously naive view naturally following from this that if a man has correct beliefs about an object he will thereby at once know what he ought to feel about it, and feel what he ought to feel. To such general questions as 'What sort of things ought to be desired or feared (pitied, loved etc)?' we can return no answer that is of permanent value to the educator." 3

How then, can we ever know that we are feeling the 'right' emotion? Is there anything the educator can say, in other words, about the value element present in emotions?

Suppose a person claims to enjoy wars. And suppose that we ensure that he is not just reporting the feeling he happens to have regarding war. In other words, he is not just appraising his own feelings, he is in fact appraising the situation: war. And suppose we find no failure on his part in terms of the EMP, GIG, or KRAT components: in other words he is aware of, and has thought carefully about the various facets of wars and people involved in them (This is of course, a very big supposition). Can we, as educators, now do nothing but accept that this person just happens to enjoy wars?

We can begin by questioning him a little closer. Does he mean he enjoys reading about wars, because they make exciting history? Does he enjoy the real thing? Which aspect of war does he enjoy? Does he enjoy the various strategies of battle; or the ingenious weapons used; or the atmosphere of excitement; or the capture and torture of men in combat; or the maiming and killing of civilians? If he only enjoys some of these, for instance the strategies, and excitement, we can ask him to weigh up the value of these (which we can after all find in sport) against the other consequences of war. He may claim to enjoy every aspect of war. If he can happily see himself, or anybody else (including people who hate pain and bloodshed, or people close to him) in whatever war situation we depict for him (and we can use whatever means available to make this depicting as realistic as possible) he may really enjoy war. But our discussion need not end there. We can bring out the implications of his enjoyment in

terms of lack of concern for his own life, or that of anyone else. We can examine many other values he holds, and demand that he be consistent (rational). And we can point out to him the ways (if any) in which his behaviour or actions do not bear out the values which he claims to hold.

In other words the answer "Yes, I know all that, but I still enjoy it" (be it war, or whatever) need not be the last word that can be spoken on the subject. It is true that fundamental disagreements can exist on questions of value. It is not true that rational discussion can do nothing to clarify and sometimes to resolve such disagreements. If our concern is to increase children's rationality, then it will also be to encourage them to explore the nature and implications of their own, and other people's, emotions and value judgements in as full a manner as possible. This, our fifth aim in the education of the emotions, is one which is curiously absent in John Wilson's work. For he, rightly I think, warns educators against deciding what should be thought "'truly" desirable, pitiable, fearful, lovable, and so on." But the end result of his taxonomy, of being emotionally educated, is feeling 'rightly', or having the right emotions. Wilson writes :

"Given the relevant abilities plus KRAT(1), then the person will have deployed or brought to bear his abilities on the situation, and will then know what he ought to feel and how he ought to act."⁴

But what of the person who brings to bear all the ^{r.}abilities, and still does not know what he ought to feel? For not only can controversy rage publicly over the question of values, but also we privately can be very

confused about how we ought to feel.

Wilson uses three examples to illustrate the different ways in which we can fail in KRAT(1). The first is that of a pharisee attending a meeting determining what is to be Jesus's fate, and failing to realize that he ought to feel pity. The second, which I have already referred to, is the case of the older pupil who fails to realize that he ought to feel sympathy for the new boy. And the third one is that of a girl who fails to realize that she ought not feel attracted to the sort of man who is trying to begin a relationship with her. It is apparent that the first two examples involve moral values. And it is because they are moral values which are commonly held that Wilson can slip so easily from knowledge of the facts of the situation, to knowledge of what one ought to feel. If we believe that other people deserve our concern, then it is not difficult to see the innocent, or the frightened deserve our pity, and our sympathy. The third example could be moral (if the girl ought not to become involved with the sort of man who, say, would cheat on his wife) or prudential (if the girl ought not become involved with the sort of man who, say, is liable to become violent). Let us look at these examples in a slightly different way to show how difficult it can be to discover how we ought to feel. What ought the Pharisee feel toward those out to crucify an innocent man? What ought the older pupil feel toward pupils teasing the new boy? What ought the girl feel toward "that sort of man" if not attraction? Ought each, or any of these feel anger, or hatred, or contempt, or pity, or Christian love... or nothing? Not only we, but also they may find it

difficult to answer that question. This is why our fifth educational aim must be the rational consideration of a wide range of values, including our own. This constitutes an essential element of any education of the emotions, and one not brought out by Wilson.'

The five aims which have emerged from this chapter all fall under the heading of increasing the level of rationality at which people operate. We are often made out to be at the mercy of our emotions. Learning to identify our emotions in some detail (the first aim) will allow us to examine the rationality of the beliefs (the second aim) and of the values (the fifth aim) involved in the appraisals underlying those emotions. A serious attempt to be rational and responsible about such an examination (the third aim) will enable us to deal with emotions which contradict in some way the conscious appraisals we make (the fourth aim). Together these will increase our ability to become agents, rather than victims of our emotions. It is very important not to underestimate the role rationality plays in our attempts to come to terms with our emotions.

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- 1 Wilson, John. Education in Religion and the Emotions
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- 3 Ibid pg 90
- 4 Ibid pg 142

CHAPTER 3

EMOTIONS, VALUES, AND EDUCATION

We must not underestimate the role rationality plays in our attempt to come to terms with our emotions.

But neither must we overestimate it. The question Wilson poses: 'What ~~ought~~ I to feel' is not only difficult: it is not always a useful question. Anyone attempting to educate the emotions faces some difficult questions about matters of value, 'right' emotions, and the distinction between indoctrination and education .

Wilson's approach is useful in the examples of the last chapter: where the rationality of the appraisal is in question. But note that correcting an irrational belief can only help us decide what we ought not to feel. I ought not to feel indignant if my belief that my mail has been tampered with, is mistaken. But conversely, my discovery that my mail has been tampered with need not, in itself, lead me to conclude that I ought to be indignant. The extra required are our values and ideals : these determine whether we ought to feel respect for our parents, or envy another's good fortune. The reason why Wilson has focussed on having the right emotion, and on knowing how we ought to feel (without giving much consideration to how we determine which is the right emotion) is, I think, because he is concerned particularly with "anyone who fails to feel the 'right' emotions or fails to handle his emotions properly" 1 - and because he has concentrated on the area of morality, and is himself working with at least some

notion of an ideal human .

But Wilson's formula, expressed in his taxonomy, does not apply to a significant section of our emotion experiences. Take firstly the case where I merely identify my emotion. Suppose that I feel happy, or depressed and that these feelings do not appear to be connected to any appraisal I have made of my situation. We often say : "It has nothing to do with anything else, it is just the way I am feeling." We may even be able to track down the causes of such feelings: perhaps in terms of physiological, or unconscious factors. But if I am not feeling happy or depressed about anything, then these feelings are nonrational. There is nothing in our situation which can suggest that we ought not to feel happy or depressed, because our feelings do not reflect our situation in the first place. And if we do not adhere to any value judgements about being or not being happy or depressed, we will have no reason to think either that we ought, or that we ought not to feel the way we do. We will just accept our feelings.

This example does not count against Wilson however. For he distinguishes emotions from moods. Let me therefore turn to emotions which do have objects, or targets, as he calls them. Suppose I am looking at Mt. Cook. I may feel awe, or amazement, or fascination, or love, or boredom - to mention but a few. Suppose I now ask myself: "What ought I to feel about Mt. Cook?" Each of the emotions mentioned is a valid one. In fact it is difficult to think of any emotion which I ought not to feel: unless I am committed to a human ideal which dictates a specific emotional response to mountains: such as, perhaps, awe. Some emotions I might claim to feel, do appear nonsensical: for instance

jealousy. This is because normally the concept of jealousy applies to people, not to things: though in a metaphoric way we could even feel jealous of, say, Mt. Cook's beauty. The difficulty we have in naming the emotion we ought to feel shows that this is again one of the cases where we just register a certain emotion in reaction to an aspect of the situation we are in. The emotion does have an object. But the only relevant criteria for deciding what we ought to feel, seems to be what we do feel. Ought I to enjoy, or hate riding my Honda 50? I simply accept my enjoyment, or lack of it.

Let us look at a more complex situation. Suppose that my bike has broken down, and that I feel annoyed because this will prevent me from going out for a ride. Let us assume that I am right about the facts of the situation: my bike has broken down, and this will prevent me going out. I might now consider that perhaps I ought to feel pleased about my broken down bike, as it will keep me at home to get on with my work (and let us again assume that I will indeed work). Whether I ought to feel pleased depends on whether I value getting on with my work more than going out. My annoyance is an indication that on a short time view I had rather go out. But I could decide that in the long run my work is more important. For what sorts of reasons could I decide that? Perhaps because I like my work, or because I like getting my work done, or because I am anxious to please other people who like me to get my work done, or because I think my work ought to get done because it ~~is~~ instrumental in achieving something else which I value

or because I am just getting embarrassed about not finishing my work - and so on. All these reasons, in a more or less direct way, come back to certain emotions or emotional dispositions I have. For those situations where I value something because in a direct way I love like, or desire it, and where considerations of other people, or some ideal, do not enter into it, the question of how I ought to feel can again be answered according to the only criteria relevant: the way I do feel. Thus if I am pleased to be getting on with my work purely because I value my work and I value my work purely because I get pleasure out of doing it, then I am pleased to get on with my work because I gain pleasure from it.

Is it true that all our values are in an important way related to the emotional dispositions, or emotional preferences we have? Let us suppose that I am considering whether or not shoplifting is morally justified. I may, in fact, have a strong emotional reaction against shoplifting, perhaps because of the way in which I have been brought up. But this is not the most relevant criteria upon which I can base my moral judgement. Here Wilson's taxonomy can be usefully applied: I need to consider fully (KRAT(1)) the feelings of others (ALLEMP), the consequences of shoplifting, both for me personally and for the community at large (GIG). Let us suppose that I can draw some kind of picture of what society will be like if not only I, but others frequently shoplift. But this picture will not in itself decide whether I think shoplifting morally justified. If I conclude that increased shoplifting will break down our present system of supply and demand I might consider that bad - or good. (I can argue that our system artificially creates demand for the sake of a few

who stand to benefit by meeting it) In the last analysis I will be arguing about human happiness, and quality of life. I need not adhere to majority opinion: I could be the only one who thought shoplifting morally justified (it is in fact far easier to make a fist of justifying shoplifting in general, than it is to justify shoplifting just those things you personally want). But if I am indeed making a moral judgement it must have universal^{iz}ability. In other words, I must not only be saying that I prefer a world in which people shoplift (though this is part of what I am saying, which is important in terms of our focus on emotions) but ^Dalso that I think^A everyone else should prefer the same. Of course in practice the value judgements we make are often based on our fears, hopes, loves and hates in a much more direct and less thought-out manner. Here once again the educator faces the task of increasing people's rationality.

I have argued that our emotions bear a significant relation to our values. This means that if educators can determine the emotions of children they are in fact involved in making a series of value judgements on behalf of others. This requires justification unless it can be shown that 1) It is impossible to influence the emotions of children beyond attempts to encourage the rationality of beliefs involved, or 2) The diversity and complexity of individual children make it impossible to predict whether, how and where to their emotions can be influenced, or 3) It is impossible to avoid influencing children's emotions - in which case we must ask in what direction, rather

than whether we should influence them.

These are difficult empirical questions. But we do have some evidence to suggest that a significant number of children learn to experience and display 'appropriate' emotions, through their upbringing, and schooling. The child's environment is largely controlled by adults. Here many values and emotions are 'caught'. The enthusiasm of one teacher may instil a lasting love of plants, his well-meaning, but patronising tone a contempt for Maori's. Children learn how others judge them, and react to this. The very organisation of a school can make a difference: the practice of bestowing honour and power (e.g. through the prefect system) upon those good at sport might lead to general disdain for things academic and a distrust of people pursuing these. The whole business of curriculum planning is value-laden. Learning a language is itself closely coupled with the process of acquiring values, beliefs and certain feelings about the world. We do not learn the meaning of words in isolation from the subjects they commonly describe. When children learn that Shakespeare's play "Othello" is more accurately described as tragic, rather than humorous, or just plain sad, they learn something of our beliefs about the nature of human life and love. Misunderstanding and intrigue, often written about for comic value, are in this context too serious just to call sad. Similarly children learn that feelings of awe and worship apply to God, and pity to 'those less fortunate than ourselves'. As can be expected cultural differences do exist. Lack of material possessions may not be a source of anxiety in some parts of the East, but the death of an insect

may cause dismay. The Dutch are given to feelings of pig-headed self-righteousness, the average New Zealander seldom feels really indignant about anything and the Englishman is saddled with an image of refusing to acknowledge even the existence of emotions.

In fact it is generally accepted that we not only can, but should shape children's emotions. We hear demands that schools once more sing hymns and salute the flag, as it is thought that the absence of such practices has led to love of self above God and Country. Bernard Williams writes:

"What should be feared or hoped for, and so forth is obviously, to some extent, a matter in which disagreements of value between societies and individuals come out. Equally this is a central matter of moral education. If such education does not resolve round such issues of what to fear, what to be angry about, what - if anything - to despise, where to draw the line between kindness and a stupid sentimentality - I do not know what it is." 1

Likewise John Wilson claims that:

"Morality is about what we desire for its own sake, and not essentially about what we ought to do in order to achieve what we desire." 2

It seems reasonable to conclude that we can influence the emotions of children, that we in practice attempt to do so, and that the question of direction of such influence is of central educational interest. It is not clear whether it would be possible to avoid having a marked influence, although we could let it be a haphazard one. And, of course, even if it is true that we cannot avoid having some influence, it does not follow from this that we must try to have as much influence as possible. These are our problems then: to what extent

should we aim to direct the emotions of children? Which emotions are the 'right' ones? What ought we to fear, hope for, be angry about, despise, desire, and so on?

Supposing that we did manage to inculcate some 'right' emotional dispositions, we face the further problem that it is no longer clear what has become of the distinction between indoctrination and education. Exactly what counts as indoctrination is a much disputed question in the philosophy of education. Let me just say that we can consider a person indoctrinated when, as a result of the teaching situation he was subjected to, he holds beliefs without due regard for the evidence. This can be applied where the rationality of emotions is at stake, fairly easily. A girl's amazement when she understands something quicker than a member of the opposite sex may indicate that she believes men are always more intelligent than women. If she can produce no evidence for this, and perhaps has never even considered it carefully, and if we have reason to attribute that belief to the teaching she underwent, be it from her parents, or her school, then we will call her indoctrinated: her emotion is based on an appraisal which contains a belief which she holds without due regard for the evidence. But suppose a person's disdain for Trade Unions is thought to stem back to his schooling. He and an opponent may agree on all matters of fact, without solving their dispute, which is centered around questions of value. Has he been indoctrinated? If I emerge feeling love and respect for my fellowmen many will commend the educative process I underwent: but could that not be called indoctrination? Are we educated, or indoctrinated to

stand in awe of ministers and doctors? Does an instilled love of sport reflect education or indoctrination? Does an anti-litter campaign educate, or indoctrinate? How, in other words, can we distinguish between education and indoctrination in the field of values, and emotions?

Let us look at some possible justification for encouraging certain emotions in children. Peters writes:

"Our interpretation of the world is inveterately self-referential. We find difficulty in peering out and seeing the world and others as they are, undistorted by our own fears, hopes and wishes." 3

Self-understanding is not enough: this is why he wishes to develop:

"Certain appraisals which lack this self-referential character, notably love, respect, the sense of justice and concern for truth." 4

If by "seeing the world and others as they are" Peter s means we should ensure that our beliefs about the world and others are rational, we are, (I hope it clear) in full agreement. Our nationalistic pride should not mislead us into thinking that Mt. Cook is the highest mountain in the world, not should I, in my pleasure, think my Honda 50 the fastest motorbike about. But we need not even have a concern for truth, let alone love, respect and a sense of justice, to take care over the rationality of our beliefs. We can find it rightly expedient to be rational as it allows us to operate more effectively in the world. I would tend to loose bets, or earn ridicule if my claims about Mt. Cook, or my Honda were too extravagant. Peters is mistaken if he thinks he must develop those emotions

in children to foster rationality. But if he means by "seeing" our "interpretation of the world" it seems that more than just beliefs are involved. When I judge Mt.Cook beautiful, as well as 12349 ft high, and my Honda 50 a worthwhile form of transport, as well as being capable of going up to 45 miles an hour, I am seeing and interpreting the world - I add my emotions and values to my beliefs. My admiration for Mt.Cook, in a more direct sense, and my satisfaction in a less direct way, cannot be anything but self-referential. To say I admire, or am satisfied with, a particular thing is to say something about my feelings and values. But these feelings and values at times cannot, and if they can, need not reflect my own interests. Logically I cannot admire Mt.Cook because, say, I think it a benefit to me by being a tourist attraction: that is not what we mean by 'admiration'! My satisfaction with my bike may stem from it being a cheap form of transport (which is in my interest if I wish to accumulate money) but it could also be that I think it less given to air and noise pollution than a car: in which case I am considering the interests of other people equally (or more than) my own. Perhaps Peters is really saying that we would be better human beings if our feelings about the world did not stem from our vested interests in the world. This could mean Peters considers "Love, respect, the sense of justice and concern for truth" good, or right emotions to have. His claim that:

"More precise knowledge about the conditions under which these sentiments are formed would in my view, be one of the most important contributions which social psychology could make to educational theory."⁵

depends on certain value judgements which cause him to choose "these sentiments".

Perhaps Peters is working with an ideal of what man should be, or how life should be lived. As I have already mentioned, this would indeed provide us with criteria for identifying certain right and wrong emotions. The problem (sometimes overlooked) is that people disagree about the ideal man. P.F. Strawson writes:

"Men make for themselves pictures of ideal forms of life. Such pictures are various and may be in sharp opposition to each other; and one and the same individual may be captivated by different and sharply conflicting pictures at different times. At one time it may seem to him that he should live - even that a man should live - in such-and-such a way; at another that the only truly satisfactory form of life is something totally different, incompatible with the first." 6

Some examples he gives are: "The ideas of self-obliterating devotion to duty, or to the service of others; of personal honour and magnanimity; of asceticism, contemplation, retreat; of action, dominance and power;...." 7

How, then, can we identify and justify the emotions we should guide children toward? Which ideal are we to choose? Is love the ideal? Love for what - for everything? Is it, as Wilson claims:

"...desirable that we should, on occasion, be able to feel passive, humble in the presence of something greater than ourselves" ? 8

What further range of emotions would qualify?

Perhaps it is less difficult to identify the counterpart of the ideal man. In other words, perhaps we can lead children away from wrong, or inappropriate emotions, without determining which of a variety of appropriate ones they should experience. In "Introduction to Moral Education" Wilson writes:

"We have, therefore, a category of moral inade-

quacy which is very like some notions of mental ill-health; not because he might not be able to help what he is doing, but rather because he damaging neither other people nor himself, and yet there is still something morally - or psychologically, if the word be preferred - wrong with him." 9

The first example Wilson gives is that of a boy who seduces girls. Even if

"..his behaviour damages neither himself nor other other people, it is not the sort of thing a 'morally educated' person would do: it is, perhaps symptomatic of a neurosis, a compulsive desire to conquer women, or whatever." 10

But it does not seem at all clear that this boy need be displaying a neurosis or compulsive desire (terms which do suggest some mental illness): he could, very simply and reasonably, like seducing girls. Wilson himself points out in a footnote that the argument need not work for this particular example. But surely he must provide us with some example for which it does work, if we are to understand it. He gives another:

" the person whose mental illness takes the form of feeling compelled to touch every lamp-post, or to keep washing his hands, may neither be harming other people in any obvious way, nor yet doing something which damages himself. But even this person by not being as mentally healthy or rational as he might be, is in a quite obvious sense failing in his relationship towards others. He consumes much of his energy in acting out his compulsions, energy that might be devoted toward better ends; and he may fail in some quite specific moral duty because his attention is occupied in this way." 11

Now we would presumably hold this person morally responsible because he failed in "some quite specific moral duty" , not because he was touching lamp-posts. And similarly his mental illness would seem to lie in the

degree of compulsion, rather than the subject of that compulsion. For what is the difference between consuming energy swimming, or collecting stamps for enjoyments' sake, and consuming energy touching lamp-posts - except for the number of people who share your pasttime. To provide an adequate definition of mental ill-health is no doubt difficult, but it would at the minimum seem to require some notion of lack of rationality, choice, and/or control. Wilson (though he wishes to avoid this) seems to be making value judgements about the attributes his Ideal human should have.

It may be true that the development, or avoidance of certain emotions in people will enable them to live a life less likely to be marred by various forms of mental illness which restrict the persons operation in the world. For example it could indeed be that children must at the least learn to love, to respect, to enjoy (and so on) at least some things - even if it is only themselves. And perhaps in order to interact successfully with other human beings, children must learn to feel^a certain concern for others. This is the prudential argument: if you want to be a relatively happy, well-adjusted human being (and human happiness seems to be a universal value) then you must, as a minimum, have the capacity for certain emotions. But the empirical questions we face are highly complex. Even the minimum amount of love, respect and concern might not be an essential prerequisite for a rational, happy human being. An extreme nihilist could gladly spend his life searching for the foolproof way to eliminate the whole human race, as well as himself.

Let us return to the points made by Williams and Wilson which I quoted previously: perhaps we can justify developing certain emotions in children

on moral grounds. But are emotions in themselves moral or immoral? Wilson claims they are: when we criticize a mother who does not love her children:

"...we would not be criticisizing her solely nor perhaps even chiefly, for what she did. We should criticize what she felt (or did not feel), and this would certainly be moral criticism in some sense of the word."¹²

But surely this must depend to a large degree on how the mother treats the children. Suppose she discovers that she cannot love her children, and therefore places them into a situation where they are truly loved, and happy - such as another home. She may rightly claim that although she cannot love the children, she has tried to provide for them financially and emotionally. She has accepted responsibility for the children. Wilson, in criticizing her, appears to be armed with the ideal of motherhood, which this woman failed to live up to. And once again Strawson's point is important: there are a number of ideals. Love of children is one. But I hope my example has shown, it need not be immoral to fall short of that ideal.

But had the mother treated her children badly, because she did not love them, then we would indeed call her immoral. Here we have to do with what Strawson calls the "Minimal concept of morality". He explains :

"Now it is a condition of the existence of any form of social organization of any human community, that certain expectations of behaviour on the part of its members should be pretty regularly fulfilled: that some duties, one might say, should be performed, some obligations acknowledged, some rules observed." ¹³

Perhaps the difficulties encountered in controlling some forms of behaviour, justify the development of some very basic values and emotions in children, such as

respect for person and property. In fact Peters' "love, respect, the sense of justice and concern for truth" might be justifiable in terms of this minimal morality. There is a certain feasibility about this argument, but questions of the rights of the individual, as opposed to the rights of society are fraught with difficulty. We can grant that society must prohibit some forms of behaviour. It is not clear however whether emotions themselves are harmful, and whether they can be justifiably channelled. It is also ^{not} clear, even if such channelling could be justified, that this should be called education.

I have argued in this chapter that significantly often we cannot answer the question "What ought I to feel", but merely accept the way we do feel, and furthermore that our value judgements are in an important way related to our emotions. When we add to this the, I think, reasonable view that educators can influence the emotions of their charges, we are left with trying to justify the extent and the direction of such influence. Notions of the ideal man, and the ideal way of life vary: it will not do to attempt to shape children's emotions in terms of one of these willy-nilly. Perhaps concern for the individual's mental health, and for the necessary minimal social cohesion can form the basis of justification for the development of some emotions. But these will be relatively few, and relatively general. What are we to do about the many common ways in which we affect the emotions and values of children: the ways in which we organize the schools and the curriculum, the spare time activities we encourage children to partake in, the churches we take them to, the books we give them to read, the things we enthuse about and so on, and so

forth? Must we just accept that children will end up with the values and emotional dispositions which have been reflected by their surroundings? But, then, in what sense are we educating the emotions?

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CHAPTER 4

EMPATHY

R.F.Dearden writes:

" 'Children must gradually choose for themselves their conception of the good life, and hence of happiness.' This much may be granted;* but now what is choice. Surely it is not just an uninformed and impulsive plumping where such a serious issue is involved? Choice implies not only that there be real alternatives open to us, but that we know what they are and that we have a range of criteria by which to judge them." 1

In the previous chapter I suggested that children may do much less choosing than is sometimes thought, determined as they are by their own physiological and psychological make-up, their home background, and what has been called the 'hidden curriculum' of their schooling. How can we ensure that real alternatives are open to children? What is the range of criteria by which the alternatives might be judged?

In the field of morality a distinction has been put forward between form and content. Kohlberg, the main proponent of this, argues that children pass through set stages of moral judgement (the form) which we can identify without having to take into account the particular moral viewpoints the children hold (the content, or bag of virtues). Thus:

"..the only philosophically justifiable statement of aims of moral education, the only one which surmounts the problem of relativity, is a statement in terms of the stimulation of moral development conceived of as the encouragement of a capacity for principled moral judgement and of the disposition to act in accordance with this capacity" 2

*Of course this is by no means always granted. The aim for autonomy is a controversial one, in educational circles.

Wilson uses similar reasoning in the case of the emotions.

"Since we can hardly suppose that it does not matter which outlooks, or what set of emotional reactions, we generate in them from birth onwards, must we not decide beforehand, on their behalf, which outlook and reactions are right and appropriate? The answer to this is both yes and no. Yes, if we mean that we must generate those outlooks which, while also giving them physical and psychological security, will best enable the children to become 'emotionally educated' - that is, to think for themselves, to acquire the various components we have mentioned, and (if they wish) to change or modify those outlooks when they are older. We have, indeed, that criterion or set of criteria for generating the outlooks: briefly we choose those which will help children to develop into rational and autonomous adults: and this is the only criterion that would justify us as educators rather than partisan moralists. But the answer is no, if we mean that we must decide on specific outlooks to generate in our children because we happen to think those outlooks are right by other criterion." 3

Wilson provides us with an example!

"Two sets of Christian parents might both always take the children to church and express a certain emotional attitude to divorce, gambling and swearing; but one set might encourage their children to discuss these matters, and allow the possibility of different behaviours and emotions, whilst the other might discourage all questioning and regard alternative points of view as wicked or rebellious." 4

This is fine as far as it goes. But it does not go far enough. Let us look at Wilson's example. It is certainly important that parents encourage rational discussion, and do not condemn their children for thinking or feeling differently from themselves. But it is plainly naive to think that this will produce the emotionally autonomous children or people that Wilson thinks it will. Most children who have been taken to church regularly will find the fact that some people

do not believe in God little more than a piece of curious information, while children who have been brought up to abhor dishonesty (or love dogs, or whatever) will be quite genuinely surprised to find that not everyone feels the same way. Practice in discussing these questions will certainly help these children (and later adults) become more rational in their thinking; but this may mean that they are just better at presenting their own case, while having come no nearer to really understanding what their opponents are on about. We might in true Kohlberg style, argue for the principle of concern for other people, and even act accordingly, without grasping the emotional concept of concern. As Williams puts it:

"...is it certain that one who receives good treatment from another more appreciates it, thinks the better of the giver, if he knows it to be the result of the application of principle, rather than the product of an emotional response? 5

We must not, he argues,

"Dismiss too hastily the idea that some element of passivity, some sense in which moral impulses prompt us, and courses of actions are impressed upon us, may itself make a vital contribution to the notion of moral sincerity." 6

And what of the emotions which are not in any clear sense rational or irrational: in what way will a discussion about my enthusiasm for sport, or my love of the New Zealand bush, or my hatred of earthquakes, change those feelings? I know others feel differently: but what is that to me?

I do not want to suggest that the process of influence is in any way simple, or automatic: there are of course plenty of God-fearing, and law-abiding parents who do not produce God-fearing or law-abiding children.

Children react against their parents, face peer group and other influences, and come to see certain of their parents' emotions and values as irrational. But if we accept that, to a significant extent, we passively accept our emotions, and also realize that our background plays a significant part in the forming of those emotions then we must accept that to a significant degree parents, teachers and who-ever else, play a part in deciding our "conception of the good life". Is there any way of avoiding this? Perhaps the teacher should try hard to be emotionally neutral lest his enthusiasm for plants, or maths, be catching. Yet the ability to transmit enthusiasm is one of the characteristics we admire most in teachers. Perhaps the teachers should only teach when requested: thus leaving to the pupil, the choice of whether to be exposed to such enthusiasm. But this raises problems, especially for young children: it is rather like asking them whether they like a certain item of food, before they have tried it.

Perhaps the teacher should just aim to increase the child's knowledge and rationality to the greatest possible degree (as Wilson suggests) and argue that the feelings children pick up are, to the extent that it is unavoidable, incidental. But consider this example: a class of children spend some time in a National Park. One day they 'do' trees and plants, another they 'do' river crossings and bushcraft, and a third they study the insect life in one square foot of earth. At night they write scientific reports about their findings and activities, and all the work is marked. At the end the children have a lot of detailed and systematic knowledge. But the ranger complains

that these children were not given an opportunity to get the 'feel' of the bush: that most of them left bored with, or hating the outdoor life. He claims they should have tramped and just enjoyed themselves: discussing various topics as the occasions arose: Even if this meant they might acquire less, more haphazard, knowledge. Must we dismiss the ranger's claim as partisan?

I do not think so. I think we must impart to children not only facts about the world, but some understanding for the variety of feelings and values held by people: as well as giving them an opportunity to discover the range of feelings they themselves are capable of. If we only know that some people adore motorbikes, or are frightened of heights, or love God, without having any idea how they could thus adore, be frightened, or love, then we are not well equipped to interact with these people. This can be seen by the quick and utter exasperation often shown when a confirmed atheist and theist, or a confirmed pacifist and a soldier, attempt to have a conversation about God, or war. A certain level of understanding is a pre-requisite for rational discussion: J.G.Wilson, in the context of religious education, writes of different levels:

"This first level is the attempt to learn about, and to understand or 'feel with' a wide range of religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviour. That this level be concerned with a wider range, and not be based on one tradition only, is, I am sure, crucial to real understanding of the religious phenomena. It also, of course, helps guard against the danger of religious indoctrination.....This first level teaching provides the necessary basis for, but needs very early on to be supplemented by, or taught with, the second level teaching - that is, the direct raising of the question of the truth or falsity of religious belief..."⁷

The notion of two levels can be extended to apply to education of the emotions. Only against a background of empathy, can we educate people to make a rational assessment of the emotions they, or other people, experience.

Let me look in some detail at what we mean by 'empathy', and at some of the objections that have been put forward against regarding its development as an important educational aim.

J.Gribble and G.Oliver define 'empathy' in the following way:

"..when we say that person A empathizes with person B in regard to X, we are asserting that

1. Person A knows how B feels
2. Person A 'sees' or 'understands' the reason for B feeling as he does. These first two will be called the 'knowledge condition'.

And also that

3. A 'feels' in the same manner as B over situation "B responding to X".

This shall be called the 'affective condition'." 8

At the end of their article they conclude:

"In all three fields (moral education, social science, history) the attempt to understand other people is fundamental - indeed in social science and history we maintained that this cognitive or "knowledge condition" is all that is necessary to satisfy. We conceded that there may be a necessary "affective" element in morals but we denied that this went beyond 'feeling for' other people and did not involve empathy which necessitates 'feeling with'"9

Against this, I shall argue that we need empathy, not sympathy, in order to understand other people.

Gribble and Oliver's knowledge condition is ambiguous. "Person A knows how B feels" could mean:
a) Person A knows that B feels emotion Z or
b) Person A knows the emotion Z which B feels, in the sense that he knows what the feeling Z is like.

Similarly "That A 'sees' or 'understands' the reason for B feeling as he does" could mean:

- a) Person A must 'see' or 'understand' the reason for B feeling as he does in the sense of 'seeing' or 'understanding' that the situation provides B with reason to feel as he does, or that
- b) Person A can 'see' or 'understand' the reason in the sense of 'seeing' or 'understanding' how one could find reason to feel as B does in that situation.

Gribble and Oliver seem to favour interpretations (a) :

"When we say we know how John feels, we are saying that we believe John feels a certain way and that it is true that he does." 10

Here we are indeed not empathizing. But neither do we fully know how John (or any other person) is feeling. Suppose , for example, that a friend tells me that she feels exhilarated when waterskiing. If I have no reason to doubt her word I will then know that my friend feels exhilarated when she is waterskiing. I may not know what sort of feeling this is however. Suppose I ask her whether it can be compared to the feeling (which I can try to describe) which I have when I watch a sunrise. She may explain that her feeling is also intense but not peaceful : that it could be better compared to riding a motorbike in summer. If I have ridden a motorbike in summer, and have felt exhilarated (rather than, for instance, frightened) I will now have at least some knowledge of the sort of feeling my friend is talking about. I know how she feels: in terms of interpretation (b) .For emotions like exhilaration there is no clear reason for feeling as we do: we merely identify how we feel and describe the feeling best we can. But in the case of emotions such as a man's fear

of growing old, a web of beliefs and values about the nature and importance of youth, form the underlying reasons for the fear. I might be able to understand that his age and situation provide reason for his fear. But when I say to him "I understand why you feel as you do" he will assume that I understand what it is like for him to grow old. In the interpretation (b) way I can 'see' his situation and feelings.

But interpretations (b) already include Gribble and Oliver's third affective condition ("A 'feels' in the same manner as B over the situation 'B responding to X'") The phrase "in the same manner" refers to the qualitative, rather than the quantitative similarity between the feelings A and B are experiencing. I need not feel as exhilarated as my friend, in order to empathize to some extent. I ~~can feel~~ too much emotion, which actually suggests that I am no longer empathizing, but reacting directly to a situation, rather than through feelings of another. Now whenever we successfully remember or imagine ~~how~~ something feels, we must feel something of what we are remembering or imagining. When I remember my anger or grief of a past occasion, I refeel some of that : I might even clench my fists, or burst out into tears. When I imagine what it is like to waterski (by comparing it to my own past experience of riding a motorbike) I feel some exhilaration.

The differences between (a) and (b) type knowledge and understanding is often referred to in everyday conversation. In the same way that I might know something (for instance that Christchurch is seriously polluted) but not realize fully what it means until it is in some way brought home to me

(perhaps when I learn that pollution played a significant role in my grandmother's death) , so a husband might know that his wife hates staying at home with their pre-schoolers all the time, but not really know how she feels until he has looked after the children himself for a fortnight.

I wish to argue therefore that if we are to understand and take into consideration the feelings of others , than we must empathize with them. This is why learning to empathize is important to moral education: and education of the emotions. Consider the following example:

Daughter: "You don't know how I feel..."

Father: "I do know. You feel embarrassed. Though I don't know how you could seeing that we are doing this for your own good."

Daughter: "You don't understand....."

Father: "I understand perfectly. You are scared that your friends will laugh at you because you are being collected. But I cannot understand why that should matter , seeing that your own safety is at stake."

The father knows and understands his daughter in the sense that he knows she feels embarrassed about being collected. But he does not know or understand her at all well in the sense that he cannot see that the embarrassment, and laughter of her friends matters far more to her than what she sees as an unlikely threat to her safety. In order to consider her feelings properly, he needs to make the effort to empathize with her. Note that the father does not need to sympathize with his daughter. Empathy is neutral in a way sympathy is not. When the father empathizes he is increasing his understanding of his daughter's emotions

by imagining her situation, her appraisals and her feelings. His own values and emotions are not in question. When he sympathizes with her they are: he is feeling some kind of concern for her. There is no reason to think that what the father feels for his daughter will help him understand her emotions. Even if he empathizes with her, he may of course still decide to overrule her embarrassment, but at least he will have considered it.

Gribble and Oliver argue against the use of novels and films to encourage the development of empathy in children. I shall examine their three points in turn.

"1. Getting children to empathize with fictional personages will not train a capacity to empathize with people in real-life situations." 11

This is because:

"... to see literature or film as a training ground for developing empathic capacities in children is to ignore two related points! (a) that 'empathy' with fictional personages is a metaphoric use of the term and refers to a response which simulates empathy with real people. The production of this response is largely a product of the artist's skill. (b) to attempt to encourage children to achieve empathy with people in real life which approximates to the simulated 'empathy' which we may experience in relation to fictional characters is to set our sights too high." 12

My reply to this is simply that it is not clear why empathy with fictional persons can not help children to empathize with people in real life. Granted that our empathy is a product of the artists' skill: that is exactly how the artist can help. He leads us out of our own perspective, into that of someone else: he teaches us how to go about imagining

ourselves into the shoes of others, be those others fictional or real. Furthermore I do not see that we are setting our sights too high if we encourage children to develop a similar empathy to people in real life. Certainly we might not be able to empathize with everyone in the way in which we empathize with some fictional characters. But there are many fictional characters who we cannot empathize with, because we know so little of their situation. Conversely there are a number of people in real life we can empathize with - even more fully than those in fiction. After all we can observe them, talk to them, and ask them questions about how they feel and what they think. In real life we can take a more active role in learning to empathize in a far less limited way than in fiction. And yet fiction too, so often, helps us view something from a different angle and gain some new understanding.

"2. Empathy with other people is not in any case, necessary for us to treat them impartially." 13
 "Certainly the more understanding we have of the way people think and feel the more we will be in a position to treat them impartially, with due regard for their interests, needs, and desires, etc. But such understanding is possible without empathy." 14

I have already argued that full understanding is not possible without some element of empathy. It is useful to see what we do when attempting to decide on a course of action. Suppose someone is trying to decide whether it is more economical to hold on to the car he has, or to buy a new one, whilst he can still get a reasonable rate of exchange for his old car. He will examine the arguments for and against selling his car, and finally attempt to weigh up the arguments. At

the time of looking at the arguments for selling the car he is necessarily being onesided: but of course this in no way affects his impartiality. Now in a similar way when we are trying to decide what to do in a case which affects our own and other people's feelings, we must fully consider those feelings in turn, before reaching a decision.

Suppose a mother wants to live with her daughter, because she hates her home for the aged, as predominantly old faces surround her there. The daughter knows that her mother hates the home, and understands that the old people there provide the reason. But, being relatively young, and relatively happy, the daughter has never hated anything with such ferocity: she cannot imagine what sort of feeling her mother is really experiencing. And, herself surrounded by friends her own age, she does not really understand that this can constitute a reason for hating a place. The daughter is not empathizing with her mother. As she does not fully understand the way her mother feels she will not be able to take her mother's feelings into account fully. When she comes to weigh up the situation she has no doubt that her own love of independence far outweighs her mother's hatred of the home. In this example. in order to be impartial, the daughter should try to empathize with her mother, so that she can understand her mother's (onesided) feelings properly. The mother and daughter together will most readily reach agreement if they can continue to explore their own feelings, as well as attempting to increase their understanding of what is involved in the feelings of the other. My argument, then, is that in questions where people's feelings are involved we must try to understand those feelings

fully: thus we must try to empathize. To fail to do so would be like achieving impartiality on a question of fact, by carefully refusing to give any of the arguments more than a little attention.

"3. Empathy with fictional personages may be morally miseducative as it may be morally educative." 15

Hare is criticised because:

"he seems to leave these unfortunates subject to propaganda - to biased and inappropriate imaginative exercises. For even if we allow that there be a privileged few who can weed out literary distortions by "their own unaided observations." there seems to be no guarantee that the rest of the motley (and, in particular children) won't be encouraged by novels and plays to put themselves in the wrong people's shoes or to put themselves wrongly in the right people's shoes." 16

This sounds dangerously paternalistic:

Gribble and Oliver know who the wrong and right people are, and how to get into their shoes in wrong and right ways - and this must be passed on to children correctly! It is not only in fiction that we are presented with biased accounts of situations: most people (including we ourselves) are prone to viewing the world in a somewhat onesided manner. The antidote to this is to introduce children to a wide range of opinions, values and feelings held by people; through whatever media available to us. Then we develop their critical and imaginative thinking capacities. (We have here the two levels J.G. Wilson advocated for religious education) We can encourage children to think about the sorts of facts the novelist might have played down. We could, for example, ask them to write a sympathetic account of the viewpoint held by an unsympathetic character in a novel. We can best protect children from propaganda by making them aware of the bias, not by attempt-

ting to protect them through censorship.

It might now be objected that I am doing what I have earlier criticized Peters for: In the same way that he valued the development of "love , respect, the sense of justice, and concern for truth", so I happen to value the development of empathy. However my justification for this is threefold.

Firstly, as I have argued, the ability to empathize provides us with the fullest understanding of how other people feel. If we conclude that some of their emotions are irrational we are much better equipped to understand how they could come to have such irrational emotions, and what it is like to have these. In the same way we can believe certain primitive religious beliefs to be obviously mistaken, and yet be able to understand how the beliefs came to be held, and what it was like to hold them.

Secondly, this model applies to ourselves. Though this may sound strange, we at times find it difficult to empathize with our own feelings, and this may lead to a repression of feelings in ourselves. Carl Rogers, amongst others , writes of:

"persons driven by inner forces they do not understand, fearful and distrustful of these deeper feelings, and of themselves, living by values they have taken over from others...." 17

By empathizing with those emotions which we do not like in ourselves we have a better chance of understanding them, and perhaps, then, of overcoming them, and of becoming better adjusted and more flexible human beings.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, encouraging the development of empathy in children gives educators at least a partial answer to their problem of justifying the value judgements they make on behalf

of children. It is through empathy that we can offer children something of the choice of the "good life" that Dearden talks of. By not introducing young children to, say, the joys of collecting stamps, or of caring for animals, or whatever, we might be said to have limited their freedom to appreciate those activities. But if we do our best to encourage the ability to empathize, and we encourage these children to explore what it is that people enjoy about collecting stamps, or caring for animals, then they, by trying out - in a sense - what it feels like to be involved in this, or that, have a much greater chance of breaking out of the emotional framework of their upbringing; They have, as it were, a greater range of experiences available to them. This is why the ranger was right in his insistence that the children ought to have been given a chance to get something of the 'feel' of the bush: to discover whether they themselves liked it and to discover a little of what other people could feel about it. Again, to know that people belonging to motorbike gangs love their bikes, and their gangs, is unlikely to affect the instilled feelings of fear and disgust we might feel toward them. But if we learn to empathize with their love of bikes, the security of the gang, the excitement (perhaps a need not easily satisfied in our modern society) of gang activities, and the hatred kindled by the way 'nice' people treat them, then we will be likely to end up with a better perspective on motorbike gangs, and of our society. (we can, also of course, empathize with the fear for persons and property the gangs instill in the "nice" people).

We are now in a position, I believe,

to return some answer to the earlier questions of what should constitute a distinction between indoctrination and education of the emotions, which goes beyond consideration of the rationality of the appraisals involved.

Suppose a person feels disgust for those involved in a homosexual relationship. He makes no effort to understand their feelings beyond noting that (unfortunately) they claim to love each other. He maintains that all 'right-minded' people feel as he does. If we have reason to attribute this person's feelings, and his unwillingness or inability to consider what is involved in the feelings of others; to the teaching he was subjected to, then we can judge him emotionally indoctrinated. Conversely suppose a person feels disgust for those involved in a homosexual relationship, but makes an effort to understand, and to some degree empathize with their feelings. On the basis of this he will realize that his own reaction is a subjective one, which other people may not share. This person is emotionally educated. Note that his feelings of disgust need not change; He just recognizes the subjective nature of those feelings. In the same way I might feel despair at the patronizing way in which many men treat women, but I must recognize that many women are quite contented with the status quo. By thinking myself into their upbringing, their beliefs, and their values, I can come to empathize (to some extent) with their feelings: but this will not reduce my despair.

I can now venture a definition of indoctrination of the emotions. A person is indoctrinated when, as a result of the teaching he underwent, he has certain emotions which he considers 'right', without giving

due regard and understanding (empathy) to the way other people feel, and without making any effort to explore further his own feelings.

What I have tried to show is that if we, as educators, are serious about wanting to give children a choice in matters of emotion and value, and if we wish to develop their understanding of the world, including the feelings of people in it, then it is of utmost importance that we teach and encourage them to empathize. Just as widespread knowledge provides the fuel for rationality in the field of factual beliefs, so widespread empathy provides the fuel for rationality, understanding and self-knowledge in the field of the emotions.

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CHAPTER 5

THE EXPRESSION AND COMMUNICATION OF EMOTIONS

If we must educate people to identify, understand and come to terms with their own, and other people's emotions, then we must concern ourselves with the expression and communication of emotions.

According to F.Schrag, a person expresses an emotion when:

"...he acts or speaks, and the purpose of the action or utterance is to communicate what the subject is feeling." 1

An unintentional show of emotion Schrag calls a "manifestation". My only quarrel with these definitions is that we usually communicate to someone: in which case Schrag is overlooking those times when we express an emotion purely for our own benefit . Sometimes we can be said to be communicating with ourselves: but this only applies in cases such as when I am literally having a discussion with myself. When I (intentionally) kick a chair, or swear, when quite alone, I am hardly communicating to anyone, myself included. I am, however, expressing an emotion.

Let us consider the outward signs of emotions which are not intended for communication. Are there rational, or irrational ways to express one's emotions when alone? It is irrational to express one's emotion in such a way that the consequences of the expression are detrimental to one's wants. For example, it is irrational for a person to express his anger at his motorbike, which won't start, by kicking it so that it is even less likely to start. Therefore it is educational to make children aware of the consequences of the ways in which they express their emotions.

We are not always able to control the outward signs of our emotions. Young children often give themselves away when playing hide and seek. If their purpose is really to stay hidden they should remain quiet: but they may not be able to suppress their excitement. But even if we, on occasion, cannot help showing our feelings, knowledge of this gives us greater freedom in handling such situations. Suppose for example, that I am very frightened of earthquakes and that this is bound to show. Suppose also that I am in charge of a class of children who must remain as calm as possible, as panic could be dangerous. I can then train the children that, in the event of an earthquake, I will not say a word, but will immediately duck under my desk and keep my head down: and that they are to do the same. After a few practices the children will expect this, and the things most likely to show my fear during a real earthquake (my voice and my face) I will not need to use. In the same way people tend to find it easier to lie about their feelings by telephone, or letter rather than face to face. Of course the converse is true: when it is important to show one's sincerity, this is best done in person.

The effect.. the expression and manifestation of our emotions has on other people is an important consequence children must learn to consider. In other words they must become aware of the ways other people are likely to judge them. Clothes, jewellery, hairstyle, manners :all these things count. A girl with tattoos, for example, is often for that reason alone, judged tough and untrustworthy: which may make further communication with at least a number of people impossible. In fact just as they learn a language, so also children learn

the acceptability of various ways in which they express themselves. Social rules even apply to a natural expression of emotion, such as crying. As Schrag writes:

"If children need not learn to cry, they must and do learn when to cry, how loud and how long to cry in different circumstances, when to stop crying when to suppress tears, etc." 2

The fact that the patterns of emotional expression vary considerably from culture to culture bears out the social content of such expression. It may be thought desirable that children be left uninhibited to express their feelings as they will: but as I.A. Snook explains with regard to etiquette (easily seen as a parallel):

"A child who is not taught rules of etiquette, then is being released from the imposition of custom. However an alternative description is that the child is being denied the skills necessary for his social living: his freedom is being inhibited, not fostered." 3

However, as Snook would no doubt agree, there are ways and ways of teaching etiquette - and the expression of emotions. If the teaching is 'Boys don't cry', then the tacit assumption is that to be a fully fledged boy one must be careful never to cry. However if we teach that 'Many people do not like (or laugh at) a boy who cries' we are providing a reason against crying which the child, if not at an early age, may at least later question. And we do not prohibit crying when alone: this surely makes sense: if these are social rules, then the rational person should be able to treat them as such, and not come to hold them, as is so often the case, as metaphysic laws, to be obeyed under all circumstances.

One consequence which must not be overlooked is the effect the expression of emotions has on the person himself. It may be much better for a person's mental and physical health in the long run that he vent

his emotional tension of what so ever sort - perhaps by yelling, crying, swearing, or smashing something - rather than attempting to control all outward signs of his emotions, thus keeping them pent up inside himself. It is the educators task here to introduce children to a wide range of activities through which they can express themselves: sport, acting, music, painting, writing, and so on. These activities must be socially acceptable in the sense that they must not breach the rules of our minimal morality. Thus vandalism might be a useful means of emotional release for the person involved, but this is not sufficient justification for the adverse effect it has on other people. In fact Peters writes:

"Much of civilized life, including poetry, manners wit, and humour , consists in devising and learning forms of expression which enable us to deal with emotions in a way which is not personally disturbing, or socially disruptive." 4

It would be a mistake to suggest that a person who, for instance, paints, is in any direct way expressing the emotion he is experiencing at that moment. But painting is one of the many media through which we can expand a certain emotional energy, and perhaps express something of the emotional relationship we have to our world and ourselves. As Schrag puts it:

"...since we recognize that the world looks different in nostalgia or love or despair - or , in Satre's words, that emotion produces a 'transformation of the world' - it can be said that we learn to express emotion by acquiring the means of portraying a transformed world" 5

Obviously different people find themselves better able to express themselves in some media, rather than others. Therefore, again Obviously, it is of utmost educational importance to encourage children to find the forms of expression in which they are most at home, and to help them develop the skill and accuracy in these fields

which will allow them to express themselves to their fullest potential.

Communication with other people is one of the most important ways in which we express our emotions.

G.Yarlott writes:

"Whether we heed them or not, in fact, nonverbal signals are constantly being exchanged in the classroom, conveying significant information about the attitudes and dispositions of their senders." 6

This makes it sound a very conscious, and intentional form of interaction. A truer description is probably that both teacher and pupils manifest their feelings and attitudes in many ways: and that both teacher and pupils can be trained to become more sensitive in recognizing such 'signals' as Yarlott calls them. We often communicate our feelings to others in so many subtle ways. Just as children are sent out to observe the workings of farms, or factories, so they might be sent out to observe people's facial expressions, gestures, movements, sounds - and so on. No doubt this will teach them much about the ways in which people appear to react and feel in various situations -and it might teach them something of the clues they themselves use to judge other people, or their feelings -thus perhaps enabling them to become more rational about this. It is important to remember that an assessment of someone's feelings based on our observations is essentially a guess. A more, or less likely guess, certainly: but still a guess. The extremely sad and worried looking lady in the street might just be ticking off her shopping list in her head; The child who appears to be listening to a piece of music with concentration and apparent appreciation, may just be trying hard to impress the teacher. Observations alone will not allow children (or adults) to become aware of

their mistakes, of the ways in which they are stereotyping people - generally of the complexity of human feelings.

Thus teaching children to communicate must be a basic educational aim. For it is important that we learn to empathize, and if our observations of other people are liable to be mistaken, therefore communication is essential. Furthermore people must learn to identify their emotions in as detailed a manner as possible, and it is through the expression of our emotions that we often learn to identify them accurately. And as a significant part of our emotional expression is meant to convey something to other people, educators have some good reasons for wanting to encourage children's ability to communicate in as clear and detailed a manner as possible. Our most determined efforts to understand and empathize with another person are likely to fail if that person will not, or cannot explain to us how he sees his situation, and how he feels about it; and the will-not and cannot may be closely related. There are people who claim to understand the feelings of others without needing any outward form of communication. However for most of us feelings can be misunderstood even in the closest relationships, and talking things out is often the best solution.

We can now see that empathy and communication are different sides of the same coin.: by becoming aware of the range of feelings other people experience in various situations, and of the ways in which they express those feelings a child not only expands his scope for communication: he also learns to understand himself better. And such increased self-knowledge

will make him more readily able to understand and empathize with other people. Particular forms of communication suit particular children : an extreme example is that of autistic children who can sometimes be reached through music. But language is the vehicle through which most of us communicate frequently, and in the most detail. Therefore our ability to use language has a great deal to do with how well we ourselves, and others, understand our emotions.

Exposing our feelings to others is often a delicate and difficult process. It takes effort and trust on the part of both parties to get beyond the "IT's just that I feel;...I don't know how to put it...Oh, it doesn't really matter " stage. Peters writes:

"...if people are concerned with finding out what is true, it must in general be the case that they are disposed to reveal their thoughts and feelings to each other."

Therefore, he claims,

"For any educator , honesty and sincerity must be cardinal virtues..."

For after all

"Often one has some strong motive for being insincere - for instance fear or shame - and the feeling associated with the feigned appraisal helps to develop a tendency towards deceiving oneself as well as others." 7

I have already agreed with Peters that children should be encouraged to be honest with themselves - and that such honesty (and accuracy) in identifying one's own emotions is often achieved through communication. But though it may certainly be true that we must in general be disposed to reveal our feelings, this does not mean that we must always, in specific situations, be disposed to do so, or that there cannot be reasons other than fear or shame that can stop us from communi-

cating our true feelings to others.

Firstly we may hide our emotions because they are based on unconscious, incomplete, or irrational appraisals. Thus I do not show my immediate dislike or distrust of someone, lest my feelings change when I get to know him better, or because I have not reason to distrust him. Secondly we may not reveal our feelings because of the way these would affect other people. Thus I may not tell a relation in hospital of my despair over his condition. My earlier example of my efforts to hide my fear of earthquakes from a class of children fits here. Thirdly we may avoid showing our feelings because this would leave us ourselves in a difficult , or vulnerable position. Thus I may not reveal my extreme liking for someone, when I judge the feeling to be unreciprocated, and a possible cause of embarrassment.

This last category poses a special problem for the educator. Those feelings which mean most to us are often the most difficult to reveal, and leave us the most vulnerable. Either a certain balance has to exist (I will only reveal this much about myself, if you are prepared to open up likewise) , or a great deal of trust (I need confidence that you are a sufficiently empathetic listener who will not use this knowledge of me, to wield a certain power.) Both the balance, and the trust are often most notably missing in the classroom situation: which raises the question of the pupil's right to privacy. His relationship with the teacher may not be such that the pupil can easily write on topics such as "My favourite pasttime" or "The most important thing in my life " - and it is not uncommon for his work to be marked partially on 'apparent sincerity'. Some of the recent honesty-type

interaction exercises , intended specifically to increase the child's ability to communicate and empathize make more far-reaching demands on pupils. Demands which may leave the pupil vulnerable, forced to trust teachers in whom they have little confidence. The dangers of such stress on honesty and sincerity are very real, and may leave teachers in the end judging pupils as greater or lesser people, rather than as people with greater or lesser skills. Of course much depends on the individual teachers , and as one of the results of increased communication is hopefully a certain break-down in the rigidity of expectations, stereotyping , and role-playing, this may apply to the traditional teacher/pupil relationship too. It does seem most important, however, that there be a safety-valve: that the pupils are at all times given a choice of activities which will allow them to express their feelings in a less direct and personal way.

Our educational aims with regard the expression of emotions are, then, as follows: Firstly we must make children aware of the consequences of the ways in which they manifest , or express their feelings: including the consequences in terms of the effects they have on other people. Secondly we must introduce children to a wide range of media in which they can express themselves, and help develop their potential for such expression. Thirdly we must develop the child's ability to communicate his feelings to others openly and accurately: whilst if possible avoiding too great an invasion of the child's privacy. It is hoped children will , then, be in a better position to decide when, how and to whom to express their emotions.

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CONCLUSION

Let me just recap very briefly.

I have argued that an emotion is, in part, a cluster concept. Appraising the feeling we are experiencing (in terms of strength, turbulence and pleasantness) is a sufficient, but not a necessary condition for something to be an emotion. (e.g. boredom, depression). In the case of certain emotions it is necessary (though not sufficient) that we appraise our situation (indignation, pride). Physiological sensations, although they may be necessary for some emotions (such as terror) do not constitute necessary, or sufficient conditions for emotions, whilst actions, and overt expressions of feelings are not conceptually connected to the class of things called 'emotions' at all.

It is important that people are rational about their emotions. Therefore, in our efforts to educate the emotions, we will be concerned to encourage detailed and accurate identification of emotions, which will allow for an examination of the rationality of any underlying beliefs and values. It is important that a serious attempt be made to be rational and responsible about such an examination, and that the knowledge and application is developed to allow people to deal with emotions which contradict the conscious appraisals they make.

However concern for the rationality of emotions is not sufficient. Educators can and do influence children's emotions and related value judgements. Some justification for this can be found in a concern for the individual's mental health, and for a necessary minimal social morality. But the influence commonly goes beyond this, posing a serious problem

of justification for the educator, as well as a difficulty in distinguishing between indoctrination and education of the emotions.

Rationality alone cannot be the solution to these problems, but the development of empathy in children provides the educator with some safeguard against instilling his own values and emotional patterns in them. Through their ability to empathize children will be able to increase their understanding of other people, and in a more real sense be able to discover something about their own feelings, and about the "good life", the moral ideals and the general values which they might choose. It is the lack of ability, or willingness to recognize and empathize with emotions different from his own, which marks the emotionally indoctrinated person.

Finally our concern to increase the children's ability to empathize must lead to a concern for the expression and communication of emotions. Children must be aware of the consequences of the ways in which they express themselves, and they must be encouraged to develop their potential to express themselves accurately through whatever media best suits them.

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